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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/976,519	10/12/2001	Keiso Shimakawa	SCEITO 3.0-091	2094
530	7590	12/15/2005	EXAMINER	
LERNER, DAVID, LITTENBERG, KRUMHOLZ & MENTLIK 600 SOUTH AVENUE WEST WESTFIELD, NJ 07090			BULLOCK JR, LEWIS ALEXANDER	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2195	

DATE MAILED: 12/15/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/976,519

Applicant(s)

SHIMAKAWA ET AL.

Examiner

Lewis A. Bullock, Jr.

Art Unit

2195

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 September 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,7,9 and 19-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,7,9 and 19-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 October 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1, 19 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by MITCHELL (U.S. Patent 6,349,301).

As to claim 1, MITCHELL teaches a virtual world system (virtual world environment employing a client-server architecture), comprising: a server computer (server / server computer); a plurality of terminal computers (client / client computers) connected to the server computer, wherein avatars (avatars) of operators (user) of the plurality of terminal computers are displayed in a virtual world generated on the server computer (col. 5, lines 12-21), and are caused to act on the basis of operations (each object has operations associated with the data / update) (col.4, lines 62-63; col. 3, lines 15-39) by the operators (users) of the plurality of terminal computers, each of the plurality of terminal computers being operable to make an object having a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2) available on the terminal computer (client computer) to be controlled by the operations by the operator (user) of the terminal computer when a predetermined condition

(change condition / move condition) is satisfied during execution of an application (client application / game application) on the terminal computer (client computer) (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37), each of the plurality of terminal computers (client computers) including a control unit (processor) operable to permit the operator of the terminal computer to participate in the virtual world (col. 6, lines 29-37) by transmitting information (change information / object information) regarding the operations by the operator to the server computer (server) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6) and, under control of the operator of the terminal computer (user), transmitting the object to the server computer (server) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6), wherein the server computer (server) includes an object storage unit operable to store a plurality of the objects (server maintains a world database that contains the most up-to data version of the entire VWE and includes all objects disposed therein) (col. 7, lines 21-32) transmitted from ones of the plurality of terminal computers in association with information identifying the operators of the ones of the plurality of terminal computers (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); and object display means operable to display the plurality of objects in the virtual world on the plurality of terminal computers (clients) on the basis of the operations by the operators identified by the stored identifying information, using the information regarding the operations received from the plurality of terminal computers (via the users views and manipulates the objects on a display, e.g.

by adding, deleting, or moving the objects within the VEW and all updates to the VWE are handled automatically and dynamically by the server) (col. 6, lines 29-37).

As to claim 19, MITCHELL teaches a server computer (server / server computer), comprising: an object record area (server maintains a world database that contains the most up-to data version of the entire VWE and includes all objects disposed therein) (col. 7, lines 21-32) operable to store object data concerning objects displayable in a virtual world, the object data being stored in conformity with a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2); a virtual world control unit operable to generate the virtual world and to output object display information to participant terminals (client / client computers) in communication with the server computer for controlling display of the objects in the virtual world on the participant terminals in accordance with operations by operators of the participant terminals (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37); a communication control unit operable to receive the object data and information regarding the operations by the operators from the participant terminals (via the server handling all updates automatically and dynamically from the clients) (col. 6, lines 29-37; col. 6, line 43 – col. 7, line 32), wherein the object record area is operable to store the received object data in association with information identifying the operators of ones of the participant terminals having transmitted the object data (server computer administers a world database that contains

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the properties for each object associated with all the users) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6), and the virtual world control unit is operable to output the object display information for display of the objects using the object data stored in the object record area in accordance with the received information regarding the operations by the operators and the stored information identifying the operators (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37).

As to claim 22, MITCHELL teaches a virtual world system (virtual world environment employing a client-server architecture), comprising: a server computer (server / server computer) operable to generate a virtual world (virtual world); and a plurality of participant terminals (clients / client computers) in communication with the server computer, each participant terminal including a terminal display unit (display) operable to display an image and to enable an operator at the participant terminal to interact with the virtual world (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37), an object providing unit operable to make an object having a predetermined format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2) available on the participant terminal (client computer) to be controlled by the operations by the operator (user) of the participant terminal when a predetermined condition (change condition / move condition) is satisfied during

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execution of an application (client application / game) on the participant terminal (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37), and a communication unit operable to transmit an object selected by the operator of the participant terminal to the server computer (server computer) (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6), and the server computer including a storage unit operable to receive the selected object and to store the selected object in association with information identifying the operator of the participant terminal from which the selected object was transmitted (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6), and a server display unit operable to generate information for display of stored virtual objects in a virtual world by the participant terminals on the basis of operations by the operators identified by the stored identifying information (via the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of sent by the users that manipulate objects to thereby return the updated information for display to the client computers) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6) , the operations being communicated from the participant terminals (client computers) to the server computer (server computer), wherein the communication unit of each participant terminal is operable to receive the information generated by the server display unit, and the terminal display unit of each participant

terminal is operable to generate the image using the information received from the server display unit (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 7, 9, 20, 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MITCHELL (U.S. Patent 6,349,301).

As to claim 20, MITCHELL teaches an information processor (client computer), comprising: a control unit (processor) operable to execute a game application (client application / game) to enable interactive game play by a player (user) (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37) thereby presenting an object (artifact, etc) having a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2), the control unit further being operable to display the object together with other items with which the object interacts in a virtual world (VWE) facilitated by a server computer (server / server computer) (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37); and a communication

control unit operable to transmit the object and information concerning operations by the player to the server computer in association with information identifying the player for incorporation of the object in the virtual world (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6) and to receive from the server computer information for displaying the object together with the other items in accordance with the operations by the player (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display) (col. 6, lines 29-37). However, MITCHELL does not teach that the game application when executed presents a problem to be solved. Official Notice is taken in that it is well known in the art that a game application would present a problem to be solved by the player such that if the problem is solved the player is awarded a prize, i.e. an object. Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the teachings of MITCHELL would present a problem and award an object upon answering the problem since MITCHELL executes a game application.

As to claim 21, MITCHELL teaches a recording medium having information recorded thereon for performing a method of an object for incorporation in a virtual world (VWE) and displaying the object, the method comprising: executing a game application (client application / game) by an information processor to enable interactive

game play by a player (user) (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37) thereby providing an object having a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2); transmitting the object from the information processor to a server computer (server computer) (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); transmitting first information (update information / user information) concerning first operations by the player (user) from the information processor to the server computer (server computer) (server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); incorporating the object in a virtual world generated by the server computer in accordance with the first information and second information (user information) regarding second operations by an operator (user) of at least one other information processor (other client computer) in communication with the server computer (via updating the other client computer based on perception information / bystander information wherein the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); and displaying the object at the information processor using information received from the server computer regarding the virtual world, wherein the information received from the server computer takes into account the first information and the second information (via

updating the other client computer based on perception information / bystander information wherein the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6).

However, MITCHELL does not teach that the game application when executed presents a problem to be solved. Official Notice is taken in that it is well known in the art that a game application would present a problem to be solved by the player such that if the problem is solved the player is awarded a prize, i.e. an object. Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the teachings of MITCHELL would present a problem and award an object upon answering the problem since MITCHELL executes a game application.

As to claim 23, MITCHELL teaches a method of handling an object for incorporation in a virtual world and display of the object, comprising: executing a game application (client application / game) by an information processor (client computer) to enable interactive game play by a player (user) (col. 5, lines 50-55; col. 6, lines 7-19; col. 6, lines 29-37) thereby providing an object (artifact, etc.) having a predetermined data format (object oriented format) (col. 4, line 65 – col. 5, line 2); transmitting the object from the information processor to a server computer (server computer) (via the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of sent by the users that manipulate objects to thereby return the updated information for display to the client

computers) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); transmitting first information concerning first operations (changes of object attributes / update information / move information) by the player (user) from the information processor to the server computer (server computer) (via the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of sent by the users that manipulate objects to thereby return the updated information for display to the client computers) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); incorporating the object in a virtual world (virtual world) generated by the server computer in accordance with the first information and second information (user information regarding objects of other client computer users stored by the server computer) regarding second operations (update information / move information) by the operator of at least one other information processor (other client computer) in communication with the server computer (server computer) (via updating the other client computer based on perception information / bystander information wherein the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of the users manipulates of objects) (col. 6, lines 38-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6); and displaying the object at the information processor using information received from the server computer (server computer) regarding the virtual world, wherein the information received from the server computer takes into account the first information and the second information (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on

display) (col. 6, lines 29-37). However, MITCHELL does not teach that the game application when executed presents a problem to be solved. Official Notice is taken in that it is well known in the art that a game application would present a problem to be solved by the player such that if the problem is solved the player is awarded a prize, i.e. an object. Therefore, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the teachings of MITCHELL would present a problem and award an object upon answering the problem since MITCHELL executes a game application.

As to claim 7, MITCHELL teaches permitting the player (user) to access the server computer (server computer) and to participate in the virtual world generated by the server computer, the step of displaying the object including displaying at least a portion of the virtual world; and making the object available for control by the player in the virtual world (via server computer is used to download a VEW to a large number of individual client computers so that objects selected by the user or rendered by an application are presented on display and the server computer administers a world database that contains the properties for each object associated with all the users and handles the updates of sent by the users that manipulate objects to thereby return the updated information for display to the client computers) (col. 6, lines 29-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6).

As to claim 9, MITCHELL teaches setting an attribute for the object which is transmitted to the server computer (server computer); and determining a mode in which

the operator uses the object in the virtual world based on the attribute (via the object having a property such as location and performing a move operation to another room wherein the location would change) (col. 4, line 62 – col. 5, line 48; col. 6, lines 29-59; col. 6, lines 63 – col. 7, line 6).

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 7, and 9 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

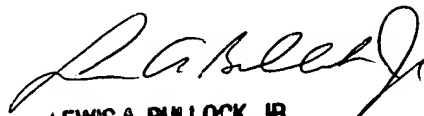
6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lewis A. Bullock, Jr. whose telephone number is (571) 272-3759. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng An can be reached on (571) 272-3756. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


LEWIS A. BULLOCK, JR.
PRIMARY EXAMINER

December 9, 2005